

Summer 2003

Natural News

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Interpretive kiosk at the Nikolaisen Waterfowl Production Area.

~photo by USFWS

Lake Region Birding Trail ~by Stacey Eriksen, EPA Region 8

The Lake Region Birding Trail was dedicated at the Nikolaisen Waterfowl Production Area, seven miles north of Cando, ND on June 5, 2003 with 64 people in attendance. Roger Hollevoet, project leader of the USFWS Devils Lake Wetlands Management District (<http://devilslake.fws.gov/>) was master of ceremonies. Other speakers included Sara Otte-Coleman, Director of the ND State Department of Tourism, Barb Britsch of the Devils Lake Tourism Bureau, Brad Bergdahl of the Towner County Economic Development Corporation, and Lloyd Jones, coordinator of the ND Wildlife Refuge System.

The Devils Lake area is part of the Prairie Pothole Region made up of wetlands complexes interspersed with grassland habitat. The Basin also includes hardwood deciduous forests which is unique to the prairie. These areas provide valuable wildlife habitat, water quality improvements, erosion minimization, flood water management, carbon sequestration, ground water recharge, recreation, tourism,

and education. The Devils Lake Basin and the Lake Region Birding Trail contain national public lands that are part of the National Wildlife System (Sullys Hill National Game Preserve, Lake Alice National Wildlife Refuge, and the Nikolaisen, Wengeler, Martinson, and Hofstrand Waterfowl Production Areas) and ND State Parks (Graham's Island State Park and Shelper's Grove State Park, Old Settlers Park, Black Swan Game Management Area, and Stump Lake National Wildlife Refuge).

North Dakota has more national wildlife refuges than any other state and is home to 365 different species of birds. The National Wildlife System is celebrating a century of conservation this year. The Lake Region Birding Trail fits in with local efforts supporting ecotourism including the Sullys Hill 4th Annual Birding and Nature Festival (July 24-27, 2003, <http://www.sullyshillbirdfest.com/>)

A birding trail guide and an interpretive kiosk and overlook at the Nikolaisen Waterfowl Production Area were funded by a partnership between a number of groups. 20,000 copies of the birding trail guide were distributed to Devils Lake, Cando, Lakota, Leeds, and Minnewauken. The project started with \$20,000 in seed money from the Environmental Protection Agency Region 8 in a grant to the Consensus Council. Other partners included Towner County Economic Development Corporation, Devils Lake Area Visitors Bureau, North Dakota Tourism, Audubon Dakota, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Cando Bakery supplied cake and the Northern Plains Electric Coop provided tables and chairs for the dedication event. This grant is just one of a

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number of EPA efforts to support ecotourism, wetlands flood storage and water quality, and conservation efforts in the Devils Lake area.

The Watershed Approach-- Still Going Strong ~by Peter Ismert, EPA Region 8

As many people around the Rocky Mountain and Northern Plains can attest, EPA Region 8 has been working with people at the state and local level for a number of years to help communities protect and restore their local water resources. Many local watershed groups have received grant funding, technical assistance and participation from regional watershed staff. Recently, EPA at the national level has renewed the Agency's commitment to the watershed approach. Earlier this year, Tracey Mehan, EPA Assistant Administrator for Water, sent a memo asking the EPA Regional water managers to enhance our implementation of watershed approaches, which he says are "grounded in sound science, innovative solutions, and broad public involvement."

Among other actions, Mehan has created a steering group within EPA, the Watershed Management Council, to help advance the watershed approach. The Council is working to identify strategies to better support and build the capability of local watershed groups, and to bring together EPA's authorities and tools to better support watershed efforts.

As part of this renewed commitment to watershed protection, EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman established the \$15 million Watershed Initiative to fund 20 high priority watershed efforts across the country. Regional and national experts selected the winners from a highly competitive field of more than 176 nominations. Each of these watershed organizations exhibited strong partnerships with a wide variety of support, showed innovation, and demonstrated compatibility with existing governmental programs. A complete list of watershed projects selected for funding and more information about the initiative is located at:

<http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/initiative/> Two watersheds in Region 8 were selected for funding-- the Upper South Platte in Colorado and the Clark Fork-Pend Oreille in

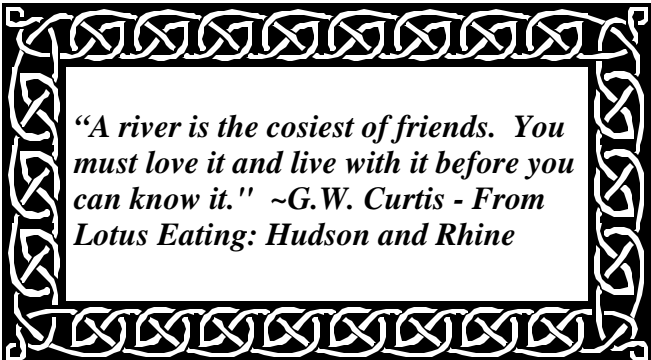
Montana and eastern Idaho. The Watershed Initiative will also be providing assistance to regional or national organizations to train and educate watershed groups on sustaining their efforts into the future (see *Watershed Groups: Organizational Needs* in this issue).

Upper South Platte: The Upper South Platte watershed contains over 1.2 million acres of public lands, provides municipal water for about 75% of Colorado's residents, and is home to many threatened and endangered species. The watershed has recently been hit by extensive wildfires, including the 2002 Hayman fire, resulting in massive sedimentation in the South Platte River and its tributaries. The Coalition of the Upper South Platte will use Watershed Initiative funding to provide organizational capacity building, to enhance post-fire recovery and restoration efforts, to protect remaining unimpaired streams and wetlands, and to promote volunteer driven restoration and clean-up efforts. For more information on the Coalition's activities, email uspwpa@chaffee.net

Clark Fork-Pend Oreille: This 26,000 square mile watershed covers Montana's largest river basin, the Clark Fork, and Idaho's largest freshwater lake, Pend Oreille. Four watershed groups in Montana, tribal interests in the Flathead basin, and the Tri-State Water Quality Council operating in Idaho have partnered to address nutrient pollution through a combination of activities outlined in existing watershed plans. Projects will expand participation in voluntary nutrient reduction programs, implement stream and habitat restoration using agricultural Best Management Practices, reduce lake nutrient and sediment loading along tribal lands, and institute comprehensive monitoring systems to analyze and report trends. For more information on the Clark Fork-Pend Oreille efforts go to <http://www.tristatecouncil.org>

Watershed Groups: Organizational Needs ~by Marc Alston, EPA Region 8

As the watershed movement matures, watershed groups are rarely saying, "our work is done." Rather, groups are identifying long-term needs for both watershed health and their organizations. An overview of issues that often confront watershed protection organizations is as follows: watershed groups cite lack of resources for administrative and operational purposes as their number one obstacle. A high percentage of groups struggle to sustain themselves. Many groups have not developed financial plans or strategies, do not have experience in fund-raising or organizational development, or there are a lack of resources in the watershed to support a financially stable organization. There has been a lack of focus on these issues, with little support, training, or tools to overcome these problems. These issues are also very prevalent with other local natural resource protection partnerships.



"A river is the cosiest of friends. You must love it and live with it before you can know it." ~G.W. Curtis - From Lotus Eating: Hudson and Rhine

There are efforts underway to provide services to watershed groups to help them become sustainable. There are now nearly 20 State level organizations created to provide services that build the capacity of watershed groups. (In EPA Region 8, these organizations exist in Colorado, Montana and Utah). In December 2002, 12 State and regional level groups met at an Athens, Georgia retreat organized by River Network, under EPA Region 8 and C.S. Mott Foundation sponsorship. The Athens retreat identified services that watershed groups most need in their efforts to become sustainable, the services that are already available, and the gaps that need to be filled. A collaborative process was outlined to fill those gaps and raise the additional resources needed to provide comprehensive, capacity-building services to America's watershed organizations.

The Athens meeting also resulted in an outline of a proposal to build an integrated, national support system for local and grassroots watershed groups working towards institutional sustainability. This system will be developed in collaboration with state-based river conservation groups (in 2003 to include partner groups in Colorado and Wisconsin) and the Institute for Conservation Leadership. This support system, when fully implemented, will include standardized assessment techniques, and help in developing organizational Action Plans, training materials, locally-based training workshops, one-on-one consulting services, training for trainers, and matching grants to implement organizational Action Plans. Beginning in late 2003, Trees Water and People will be implementing one of these initial programs in Colorado, with partial funding from the EPA Region 8 Consolidated Funding Process.

Under the National Watershed Initiative, there is currently a request for proposals (RFP) that will provide support for training and education on watershed planning, and assisting groups with improving water quality and providing long-term watershed protection. Projects supported under this RFP will be profiled in a future Natural News. See the accompanying article in this issue, "The Watershed Approach-- Still Going Strong" for more information on the National Watershed Initiative.

For groups interested in evaluating their sustainability, an initial set of criteria are listed below (these have been developed by River Network and other partners).

A sustainable watershed group has:

- ☐ strong leadership and a plan that identifies where it is and where it needs to go;
- ☐ enough reliable funding to make steady progress beyond merely staying afloat;
- ☐ adequate dependable, unrestricted income to support basic operational costs;
- ☐ systems and structures in place to operate efficiently and effectively;
- ☐ strong board or other governing body;
- ☐ good structure and clear decision-making processes for board, staff, volunteers.

An unsustainable organization has:

- ☐ less than six months' funding for operations in the bank;
- ☐ less than seven active and engaged board members;
- ☐ lack of clear direction, identity, or visible products and services;
- ☐ highly reliant on non-local funding sources;
- ☐ highly dependent on one or two funding sources;
- ☐ small percentage of unrestricted (discretionary) income;
- ☐ less than 20% of revenue for annual operations from membership;
- ☐ not taking advantage of available support resources;
- ☐ lack of leadership and leadership development;
- ☐ lack of organizational systems (governance, fundraising, finance, volunteers, etc.);
- ☐ inadequate population base or local acceptance of watershed work.

For more information, please contact **Marc Alston** at 303-312-6356 or alston.marc@epa.gov

Clean Water Act, Continued
~by Karen Hamilton, EPA Region 8

Monitoring and assessment of surface waters is the foundation to the Clean Water Act framework which has been described in previous articles. Data from monitoring activities is necessary to:

- ☐ establish the expectations or goals for a body of water;
- ☐ describe the current condition of the water body and to what extent it is meeting the goals;
- ☐ describe the trend of the water body condition;
- ☐ determine whether the uses of the water body are being protected; and, if not,
- ☐ why and to what extent a water body is not attaining the uses established for it.

Establishing goals, or standards, is a responsibility assigned by the Clean Water Act directly to State government and those Tribal governments that meet the requirements for "treatment as a State." Section 106 of the Clean Water Act authorizes EPA to provide funds to assist the States and Tribes to conduct monitoring and assessment of their waters. However, those funds can only be awarded if the State has provided for, or is carrying out as part of its program, activities necessary to monitor and to compile and analyze data on the quality of navigable waters in the State and report results in their "305(b)" report (See Natural News Spring 2002).

Basic elements of a State or Tribal water monitoring program have not been clearly defined in the past, so the

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programs vary significantly from state to state. In the “Elements of a State Water Monitoring and Assessment Program” EPA describes what it expects all State and Tribal monitoring programs to include and implement within the next ten years (<http://www.epa.gov/owow/monitoring/elements>) Those elements are:

A. Monitoring Program Strategy

A comprehensive monitoring program strategy serves its water quality management needs and addresses all State waters, including streams, rivers, lakes, the Great Lakes, reservoirs, estuaries, coastal areas, wetlands, and groundwater. The strategy should contain or reference a description of how the State plans to address each of the remaining nine elements. It is important that the strategy be comprehensive in scope and identify the technical issues and resource needs that are currently impediments to an adequate monitoring program.

B. Monitoring Objectives

Monitoring objectives are critical to the design of a monitoring program that is efficient and effective in generating data that serve management decision needs. For example, monitoring objectives could include helping establish water quality standards, determining water quality status and trends, identifying impaired waters, identifying causes and sources of water quality problems, implementing water quality management programs, and evaluating program effectiveness.

C. Monitoring Design

There needs to be an approach and rationale for selection of monitoring designs and sample sites that best serve the monitoring objectives.

D. Core and Supplemental Water Quality Indicators

Core indicators selected to represent each applicable designated use, plus supplemental indicators selected according to site-specific or project-specific decision criteria are part of a tiered approach to monitoring. Core indicators for each water resource type include physical/habitat, chemical/toxicological, and biological/ecological endpoints as appropriate, and can be used routinely to assess attainment with applicable water quality standards throughout the State. Supplemental indicators are used when there is a reasonable expectation that a specific pollutant may be present in a watershed, when core indicators indicate impairment, or to support a special study such as screening for potential pollutants of concern.

E. Quality Assurance

Quality management plans and quality assurance program/project plans are established, maintained, and peer reviewed in accordance with EPA policy to ensure the scientific validity of monitoring and laboratory activities, and to ensure that State reporting requirements are met.

F. Data Management

An accessible electronic data system for water quality, fish tissue, toxicity, sediment chemistry, habitat, biological data, with timely data entry and public access is required.

Delivering data to EPA’s new STORET system will be required in the future.

G. Data Analysis/Assessment

The State or Tribal program needs to describe a methodology for assessing attainment of water quality standards based on analysis of various types of data (chemical, physical, biological, land use) from various sources, for all waterbody types and all State waters. Criteria for compiling, analyzing, and integrating all readily available and existing information (e.g., volunteer monitoring data, discharge monitoring reports) would be a part of the methodology.

H. Reporting

Timely and complete water quality reports and lists called for under Sections 305(b), 303(d), 314, and 319 of the Clean Water Act and Section 406 of the Beaches Act are required by the Clean Water Act.

I. Programmatic Evaluation

A robust program is maintained with periodic evaluations of the monitoring program. The evaluations determine how well each of the elements is addressed and how needed changes and additions are incorporated into future monitoring cycles.

J. General Support and Infrastructure Planning

Current and future resources needed to fully implement the monitoring program strategy include funding staff, training, lab resources, and upcoming improvements. For States to be eligible to receive their funds for monitoring in 2004, they need to have a monitoring program strategy in place, or commit to finish developing their strategy. Assisting the States to develop their strategies is the top priority for the EPA Region 8 surface water monitoring team. The team is meeting with people who design and carry out state water quality monitoring and assessment. Together they are reviewing the program in terms of the elements described above. With that information the strategies can be developed. Other organizations may find the elements a useful guide as they create or evaluate their own surface water programs.

Stormwater Regulations (Part 2)

~by Greg Davis, EPA Region 8

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater regulations were written in a phased approach. Recent (Phase II) stormwater regulations expand the universe of those entities requiring a stormwater permit. Effective March 10, 2003, operators of regulated small municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) and operators of small construction projects are required to obtain NPDES permit coverage for their stormwater discharges. The following article is part two of a two-part series, the first of which appeared in the Winter 2003

Natural News, which described the Phase II Stormwater Rule as it applies to construction activities. The second part (following) describes the rules for stormwater permit coverage as they apply to municipal stormwater systems.

In 1990, EPA established Phase I of the NPDES stormwater program. Phase I of the NPDES stormwater program addresses discharges from large and medium municipalities. These large and medium municipalities generally include those with greater than 100,000 residents and are referred to as "Phase I municipalities." Recent regulations, referred to as the Phase II Stormwater Rule, expand the requirements for municipal operators by requiring NPDES permit coverage for stormwater discharges from small municipalities. Effective March 10, 2003, regulated small municipalities are required to obtain an NPDES permit and develop a stormwater management program for their stormwater discharges where those discharges enter surface waters or a storm drain leading to surface waters.

What is a regulated small MS4?

A regulated small MS4 is any small municipally separate storm sewer system that is not covered under the Phase I rule and is required to obtain permit coverage. This includes all small MS4s located in "urbanized areas" as defined by the Census bureau (unless specifically waived) and small MS4s located outside of urbanized areas designated for permit coverage based on criteria set by the NPDES permitting authority. In EPA Region 8, regulated small MS4s outside of urbanized areas generally include those municipalities with a population greater than 10,000. The Phase II rule also applies to non-traditional MS4s such as hospitals, prisons, and school districts. Many of these facilities will be required to obtain permit coverage under the Phase II Rule.

A listing of all entities required to obtain a Phase II municipal permit (i.e., all regulated small MS4s) in the states of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming, is available on the EPA Region 8 web site at <http://www.epa.gov/region8/water/stormwater/downloads.html>

What is required under the small municipal permit?

Operators of regulated small MS4s are required to obtain a permit for their stormwater discharges. Under the permit, the system operator must design and implement a stormwater management program designed to reduce the discharge of pollutants and protect water quality. Common pollutants to municipal systems include oil and grease from roads, pesticides from lawns, sediment from construction sites, and trash.

The Phase II Rule defines a stormwater management program as a program comprising of six elements, which, when implemented, are expected to result in significant reductions of pollutants discharged into receiving water bodies. The six program elements, also referred to as "minimum control measures," are as follows:

1. Public education and outreach - A municipality must create a public education program to inform citizens about the impacts that stormwater runoff can have on water quality. This program includes preparing and distributing educational material to the community describing stormwater impacts and steps that can be taken to minimize pollution in stormwater discharges.
2. Public participation and involvement - A municipality must comply with state and local public notice requirements and should seek public involvement in the development and review of their stormwater programs.
3. Illicit discharge detection and elimination - A municipality must create a program to detect and eliminate sources of illicit discharges to their storm sewer system. This includes the development of a storm sewer system map and informing the community about hazards associated with illegal dumping and improper disposal of waste.
4. Construction site runoff control - A municipality must develop, implement, and enforce a sediment control program to reduce pollutants in stormwater from construction activities disturbing one or more acres of land.
5. Post-construction runoff control - A municipality must develop and, implement, and enforce a program to address discharges of stormwater from new development and re-development areas. Examples of post-construction controls include the use of practices such as grassed swales, porous pavement, minimizing impervious surfaces, retention ponds, and practices to protect sensitive areas such as wetlands.
6. Pollution prevention and good housekeeping - A municipality must develop and implement a program with the goal of preventing and reducing pollutant runoff from municipal operations. Examples of pollution prevention and good housekeeping measures include regular street sweeping, reducing road salting and/or sanding, and regular maintenance of storm sewer systems.



As part of a storm water program, municipalities will need to address sediment in stormwater runoff from construction sites.

~photo by Karen Hamilton



Who is the permitting authority for small MS4s in my area?

EPA Region 8 maintains NPDES permits for stormwater discharges located on Colorado Federal facilities. In other areas of Region 8, the states of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming, retain permitting authority for stormwater discharges from small MS4s.

Where can I go to get more information about these requirements?

The EPA NPDES web site (<http://www.epa.gov/npdes>) provides a fact sheet series which further describes the requirements in the Phase II Rule, information about regulated small municipalities, and information on each of the required minimum control measures. Additional information and links to state program web sites is available on EPA Region 8's stormwater web site at <http://www.epa.gov/region8/water/stormwater> For more information, please contact **Greg Davis** at 303-312-6082 or davis.gregory@epa.gov

EPA Regional Awards

~by Darcy Campbell, EPA Region 8

Congratulations to the winners of the EPA Region 8 2003 awards related to ecosystem protection! EPA gives the awards to thank individuals and groups for their outstanding work within the six-state EPA Region 8 area.

Friend of EPA Awards

For excellence in educating students and teachers in Colorado about the function and value of wetlands:

- ❑ **Lannie Hagan of the University of Colorado Science Explorers Program.**

For the Youth Prairie Stream Restoration Project in White Horse Creek, Pine Ridge Indian Reservation:

- ❑ **Jarid Manos, Great Plains Restoration Council**
- ❑ **Cheryl Armstrong and Michael Richardson, James P. Beckwourth Outdoor Education Center**
- ❑ **Janet Montileaux, YO! South Dakota.**

For their voluntary, proactive implementation of a pollution prevention code for the mining industry:

- ❑ **Colorado Mining Association.**

Environmental Achievement Awards

For outstanding efforts to reduce nonpoint source water pollution in South Dakota:

- ❑ **Angela Ehlers, South Dakota Association of Conservation Districts.**

For the work this group has done in land stewardship and environmental protection:

- ❑ **Wildlands Restoration Volunteers of Boulder, Colorado.**

For leadership in the creation, successful legislative passage and program design for the Colorado Watershed Protection fund:

- ❑ **Richard Fox, Colorado Watershed Assembly**
- ❑ **Chris Rowe, Colorado Watershed Assembly**
- ❑ **Rod Kuharich, Colorado Water Conservation Board**
- ❑ **Paul Frohardt, Colorado Water Quality Control Commission**
- ❑ **Senator John Evans and Representative Carl Miller, Colorado legislative sponsors.**

For his exemplary water program management leading to community stewardship and water quality improvements:

- ❑ **Harry Judd, Utah Department of Environmental Quality.**

Frank DeCouteau Award

For implementation of Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program (EMAP) water quality data collection protocols on the Missouri River:

- ❑ **Sandra White Eagle, Tanya Frederick and Chris Tyrrell, Office of Environmental Protection, Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes.**

Natural News Birthday

~by Stacey Eriksen, EPA Region 8

Natural News is five years old. Our first issue came out in April 1998 and seventeen issues have been produced. We now produce over 1800 copies and post the newsletter electronically on EPA Region 8's website at http://www.epa.gov/Region8/community_resources/steward/estnatural.html In June 2000, the Natural News Team was presented with an EPA Regional Excellence in Communication Award for their work on the newsletter. The road has been rocky in trying to continue to find funding to pay for paper, labels, and software and support staff to work on the layout of the newsletter. However, we have persevered due to the continued efforts of many people including everyone who has authored an article.

Special thanks go to the staff and support over the years, those listed below and many others. Layout staff: Scott Beckman, Kim Larson, Greg Davis, Jodie Corbishley. Office of Communications and Public Involvement press office review: Rich Lathrop, Vaughn Whatley, Jody Ostendorf. Mailing list support: Barbara Thomas, John DiPentino. Funding support: Andy Spielman, Pat Reitsma, Carol Campbell, Cynthia Gonzales. Concept and support: Nat Miullo, Karen Hamilton, Ayn Schmit, Stacey Eriksen. Mailroom staff with Bayaud Industries: Patrick Bradford, Yvonne Murrell, Robert Ornelas, Dan Wilde, Beverly Skinkle, Warren Schneider, and all of the receptionists who fold and label. Editor: Stacey Eriksen. Quotes: River Network webpage and other sources. Chris at XPEDX.

Missouri River Collaborative Training

~by Jim Berkley, EPA Region 8

EPA, the US Department of the Interior, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service are sponsoring a week-long training session on collaborative resource management to be held in South Sioux City, Nebraska, from July 20-25. The course will offer the unique opportunity to learn about collaboration together with federal, tribal and state representatives with projects and activities in the Missouri River Basin.

The U.S. Department of Interior's Office of Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution and an interagency steering committee composed of the aforementioned members, cooperated with the University of Michigan's Ecosystem Management Initiative to design a 4½ day course that explores: benefits and challenges of multi-party collaborative management processes; ways to design and manage effective processes; and strategies for overcoming common challenges. The training will use a variety of interactive approaches including real-world case studies, and simulations designed to work through elements of a collaborative process.

The invitation list is comprised of tribal, federal and state representatives working in the Missouri Basin. For more information, please contact **Deldi Reyes** at 303-312-6055 or reyes.deldi@epa.gov

Upcoming Colorado Events

~Contributed by Kim Bartels, EPA Region 8

Annual Colorado Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution Forum

September 10, 2003, Ramada Inn in Glenwood Springs
Target Audience: watershed and stakeholder groups and the entities that work with those groups, who are looking for practical guidance on various aspects of watershed management and how it relates to water quality.

Preliminary topics to be covered:

- ☐ Watershed Planning: "Blueprint for Your 'Shed"
- ☐ Effective BMPs: "Flathead or Phillips: Choosing the Right Tool for the Job"
- ☐ Funding a watershed plan: "Dialing for Dollars!"
- ☐ Stream Restoration and Water Quality
- ☐ Monitoring is a Dirty Word!
- ☐ NPS Hall of Fame 2003

There will be a networking social at the close of the afternoon. The Hall of Fame presentations will be the final event of the afternoon, right before the social. There are Recognition Awards in four categories: individual, organization, project - moving dirt, and project - moving minds. These awards recognize exemplary Colorado NPS efforts.

For further information, please contact **Laurie Fisher** at 303-692-3570.

Fourth Annual Colorado Watershed Assembly Annual Meeting

Thursday September 11 and Friday September 12, 2003.
Ramada Inn, Glenwood Springs on the Colorado River.
Registration is \$75 (includes conference materials, three meals on Thursday, and breakfast on Friday.)
Barbecue on Thursday night at a park along the Colorado River.

For further information, please contact Chuck Wanner at cwanner@frontier.net

Web Highlights

~Contributed by Roger Dean, EPA Region 8

New Incentives from USDA for Greenhouse Gas Reduction and Carbon Storage

Recognizing the unique role farmers, ranchers and forestland owners can play in reducing greenhouse gas, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced it will give consideration to management practices that store carbon and reduce greenhouse gases in implementing forest and agriculture conservation programs through targeted incentives.

USDA will consider greenhouse gas management practices when evaluating applications for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the Conservation Reserve Program and the Forest Land Enhancement Program. Department actions to reduce greenhouse gases and store carbon will include financial incentives, technical assistance, demonstrations, pilot programs, education and capacity building, along with measurements to assess the success of these efforts. **For more information, see the press release at**

<http://www.usda.gov/news/releases/2003/06/0194.htm>

and a fact sheet, "USDA Targeted Incentives for Greenhouse Gas Sequestration," at

<http://www.usda.gov/news/releases/2003/06/fs-0194.htm>

"Building Local Partnerships" Guidebook Available Online

One of a series of informative guidebooks published by Know Your Watershed, the Building Local Partnerships brochure explains why watershed partnerships are formed, what kinds of activities and events they conduct and offers advice on developing a successful partnership in your watershed. Potential stakeholders and how they can contribute to watershed planning efforts are also included. Although the series is written for watershed-based planning areas, the ideas and process can be used for developing other types of plans (such as wildlife areas) to match the concerns of the partnership. The Know Your Watershed campaign is coordinated by the Conservation Technology Information Center. **To view the brochure, go to** <http://www.ctic.purdue.edu/KYW/Brochures/BuildingLocal.html>



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Natural News

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If you have an article concerning ecosystem protection, community-based environmental protection, or watersheds; we would like to hear from you!

We need your help in updating our mailing list in order to keep Natural News coming to you! Please contact John DiPentino at (303) 312-6594 or dipentino.john@epa.gov, or write to him at the return address below.

Conserve our natural resources, please share your copy with a friend or recycle.

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Ecosystem Stewardship on the web: http://www.epa.gov/region8/community_resources/steward/est.html



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